CLAIMS

5 1.   A process for evaluating business objects with no prior association and creating dynamic solution sets based on said evaluation in a computer environment, comprising the steps of:

providing a rule engine;

wherein said rule engine evaluates said business objects without

10 requiring the intervention of a human being;

providing administration means for allowing a user to maintain the preferences for a specific instance of a business object;

wherein said rule engine uses business rules to evaluate the relationship between said business objects; and

15 wherein each business object is a voter that provides votes that are evaluated by said business rules.

2.   The process of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

providing domain tables;

20 wherein said tables are used to define the overall set of possible values for a given attribute of a business object; and

wherein said tables are static, configured, or dynamic in nature.

3.   The process of claim 1, wherein said business rules are configurable,

25 generalized statements of how common processing methods are applied to a specific intersection of data; and wherein said business rules determine privileges, application of business processes, business relationships, choices, and default values.

30 4.   The process of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing rule administration means for allowing a user to define business rule attributes.

5.   The process of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

providing rule resolution strategy means for resolving conflicts between specific preferences of voters and determining the correct solution set; and

wherein the sequence of voters and the order of the votes included for each voter determines the values in said solution set.

6.   The process of claim 1, wherein said rule engine returns one solution set for the set of business objects (voters) being referenced.

7.   The process of claim 1, wherein said business rules are cached.

8.   An apparatus for evaluating business objects with no prior association and creating dynamic solution sets based on said evaluation in a computer environment, comprising:

a rule engine;

wherein said rule engine evaluates said business objects without requiring the intervention of a human being;

administration means for allowing a user to maintain the preferences for a specific instance of a business object;

wherein said rule engine uses business rules to evaluate the relationship between said business objects; and

wherein each business object is a voter that provides votes that are evaluated by said business rules.

9.   The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising:

domain tables;

wherein said tables are used to define the overall set of possible values for a given attribute of a business object; and

wherein said tables are static, configured, or dynamic in nature.

10. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said business rules are configurable, generalized statements of how common processing methods are applied to a

5 specific intersection of data; and wherein said business rules determine privileges, application of business processes, business relationships, choices, and default values.

11. The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising:

10 rule administration means for allowing a user to define business rule attributes.

12. The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising:

rule resolution strategy means for resolving conflicts between specific

15 preferences of voters and determining the correct solution set; and

wherein the sequence of voters and the order of the votes included for each voter determines the values in said solution set.

13. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said rule engine returns one solution

20 set for the set of business objects (voters) being referenced.

14. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said business rules are cached.

15. A program storage medium readable by a computer, tangibly embodying

25 a program of instructions executable by the computer to perform method steps for evaluating business objects with no prior association and creating dynamic solution sets based on said evaluation in a computer environment, comprising the steps of:

providing a rule engine;

30 wherein said rule engine evaluates said business objects without requiring the intervention of a human being;

providing administration means for allowing a user to maintain the preferences for a specific instance of a business object;

wherein said rule engine uses business rules to evaluate the relationship between said business objects; and

5   wherein each business object is a voter that provides votes that are evaluated by said business rules.

16.   The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:

providing domain tables;

10   wherein said tables are used to define the overall set of possible values for a given attribute of a business object; and

wherein said tables are static, configured, or dynamic in nature.

17.   The method of claim 15, wherein said business rules are configurable, 15   generalized statements of how common processing methods are applied to a specific intersection of data; and wherein said business rules determine privileges, application of business processes, business relationships, choices, and default values.

20   18.   The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

providing rule administration means for allowing a user to define business rule attributes.

19.   The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:

25   providing rule resolution strategy means for resolving conflicts between specific preferences of voters and determining the correct solution set; and

wherein the sequence of voters and the order of the votes included for each voter determines the values in said solution set.

30   20.   The method of claim 15, wherein said rule engine returns one solution set for the set of business objects (voters) being referenced.

21. The method of claim 15, wherein said business rules are cached.